

U.S. House and Senate Notification
Wednesday, July 7, 2010

To: Congressional Health Staff

From: Amy Hall
Director, Office of Legislation
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Re: Important New Data Added to Healthcare.gov to Help Americans
Understand the State of Quality at America's Hospitals

Important new information about the quality of care available in America's outpatient and emergency departments, including how well hospitals care for patients with heart attacks and protect outpatients from surgical infections was added to the new HHS website HealthCare.gov. The information can be found as part of the Compare Care Quality link on the front page of the new site, <http://www.healthcare.gov/>. It can also be found on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) *Hospital Compare* website, <http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/>.

The updated information on HealthCare.gov's *Hospital Compare* includes data on the rates of outpatient MRIs for low back pain, outpatient re-tests after a screening mammogram, as well as two ratios that explain how frequently outpatient departments gave patients "double" computed tomography (CT) scans when a single scan may be all that is needed. *Hospital Compare* also includes new measures that show whether outpatients who are treated for suspected heart attacks receive proven therapies that reduce mortality such as an aspirin at arrival, and how well outpatient surgical patients are protected from infection. Previously, *Hospital Compare* had provided data only about the quality of care provided to hospital inpatients.

If you have any questions about this notification, please contact the CMS Office of Legislation.